

SEABROOK WETLAND CONSERVATION PLAN

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The Seabrook Wetland Conservation Plan was funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in accordance with the Clean Water Act and coordinated through the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP). GBEP contracted with the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to prepare the plan. H-GAC worked extensively with the City of Seabrook, representatives of other state and federal agencies, environmental organizations, and concerned citizens to develop this plan.

The plan was developed using the model conservation planning process outlined in the Texas General Land Office's (GLO) Texas Coastal Wetlands: A Handbook for Local Governments. This is one of the first projects in the state to apply the handbook's recommended local government planning process. This project will also further the goals of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan and the Habitat Protection Actions of the Galveston Bay Plan.

The purpose of the Seabrook Wetland Conservation Plan is to present a balanced approach to conserving Seabrook's unique wetland resources while promoting economic growth and improving the quality of life for its residents. This plan will also serve as a model for other bay-area cities and help to insure the health and diversity of the entire Galveston Bay Estuary.

SEABROOK

The City of Seabrook brings to this project a level of local commitment and involvement that would be difficult to match in any similar-sized city in the bay area. Seabrook incorporates nearly 13 square miles of land, including 11 miles of waterfront property just north of the narrow channel where Clear Lake opens into Galveston Bay (see vicinity map). This places the city amid the vibrant Clear Lake area; the third-largest boating center in the nation (with 1,250 slips in Seabrook alone) and home to NASA and its associated aerospace support companies (just four miles from Seabrook). Seabrook had its start as a league of land obtained from the Mexican government in 1832, was finally developed as a new town site just after 1900, and became an incorporated city in 1961 to avoid annexation by Houston or La Porte. Within the Seabrook city limits may be found brackish, intermediate and fresh wetlands, including forested wetlands, estuarine bays, and bayous. The Texas Wetlands Conservation Plan recognizes these types of wetlands as "productive nursery and spawning areas, and habitat for seafood species and other marine organisms," as well as "important wintering and migration areas for North American waterfowl."

PLAN ADOPTION

The City of Seabrook City Council adopted the Seabrook Wetland Conservation Plan on September 5, 2001. Due to the demand for development of open space, the Council immediately charged the city manager with implementing the plan. Seabrook has received grant funds to restore and protect wetlands along Pine Gully. The Houston-Galveston Area Council has also received a grant from the Texas General Land Office to help with the implementation of the plan within the top priority location, Pine Gully Shoreline. Pine Gully Shoreline is a 400+ acre site in the northern portion of the city that is being threatened by industrial development. The swift action of the Council was recognized with a Bay Stewardship Award given by the Galveston Bay Estuary Program at the 2001 State of the Bay Symposium.

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